

Susan Kelly
4121 Marsh Trail
Milford MI 48380
suekelly77@comcast.net

March 28, 2005

Joint Meeting of Michigan Senate & House of Representatives
Transportation Committees

Brighton City Council Chambers

Re: The 2005 – 2009 Five Year Transportation Plan

The "Fix it First" strategy for caring for our roads is working well. Maintaining our existing roads and transportation infrastructure is fiscally responsible and should be the first priority for Michigan's transportation funds. The taxpayers of Michigan have invested a lot of money in the system we have and the responsible thing to do is take good care of it, obviously.

I am opposed to using any of our scarce funds to build new roads, interchanges or bridges. If there was ever a model of whether building new roads to alleviate traffic congestion is effective, Livingston County would be the place to look. As one of the fastest growing communities in the state we have not been able to solve our traffic problems by putting money into new or expanded roads and traffic remains one of the main problems cited by Livingston County residents. This phenomenon is confirmed by a 1999 EPA study that shows within a few short years after road capacity is increased by 10% traffic fills that new capacity. Land use decisions precipitate the apparent need for more or bigger roads and until we address the sprawl issue in a substantive way we will not solve our traffic problems with more roads.

If there are extra monies to be spent, our state should be investing in mass transit. Clean public transportation is an effective traffic decongestant, reduces air and water pollution, protects agricultural land and open space, offers an alternative transportation choice to our youth, the elderly or those who might choose not to own a car. Most importantly, investing in reliable public transportation reinvigorates our cities and enables low-income workers access to jobs located outside of their communities. As odd as it sounds Americans living in 1950 had more transportation choices than we do in 2005, 55 years later.

We should continue to be fiscally responsible with the limited transportation dollars we have by repairing and maintaining our existing infrastructure. If we are lucky enough to accomplish that and have funds remaining, they should be invested in public transportation not more roads.

Sincerely Yours,

Susan Kelly